



## **While we continue the co-creation work to shape the development of a new arts service organization, we are simultaneously amplifying our advocacy work.**

**We have a few wins to share.**

### **February 27 Community Services Committee**

#### **Anti-poverty initiatives for artists and cultural workers in Ottawa**

Councillor Ariel Troster brought forward a motion, “that seeks to incorporate anti-poverty initiatives for artists and cultural workers in Ottawa” as part of the new Municipal Culture Plan. On why she was bringing the motion forward, Councillor Troster said at Committee: “Arts practitioners and cultural workers are key members of our community. They contribute to economic development, social cohesion and engagement and contribute to tourism and so much more in our city. If we don’t work to improve the conditions for arts practitioners and cultural workers we may lose the strong sector we have in Ottawa.”

Councillor King supported the motion reinforcing the value of the arts in our community. The Councillor spoke candidly about the discrepancies between the arts and other sectors regarding a respectful and liveable wage. “We know that artists and cultural workers provide so much to the community often for so little in financial compensation.”

Thank you to Velvet Wells who spoke in support of the motion at the Committee.

#### **Inquiries into City Reports and new Municipal Culture Plan**

Another win for arts and culture was an inquiry to City staff made at the Committee meeting by Councillor King.

The inquiry to staff requests information on the outstanding reports of the previous Renewed Action Plan for the Arts, Heritage and Culture (2013-18). The inquiry asks City staff to share a timeline for releasing the outcomes report from the former Action Plan, speak to achievements and gaps, and would those gaps be addressed in the new Municipal Culture Plan in 2025.

Since 2019, the Council, ANO and the cultural community have been petitioning and pressing for the release of the previous action plan report. We are thrilled we may finally get some answers.

We encourage our readers to reach out and thank Councillors Troster (@ariel4somesetward) and King (@rawlson) for prioritizing this work with their teams, and for their leadership and championing of Ottawa arts and culture.

[Watch the meeting here](#)



### **On the Radar**

#### **Nightlife Commissioner Office & Nightlife Economy Action Plan**

We continue to make inquiries on the Nightlife Commissioner Office, and how local artists and arts groups can be central to the success of our Nightlife economy across Ottawa.

Arts and culture plays an important in showcasing Ottawa’s nightlife to our community and its visitors.

[More about the City’s Nightlife Economy Action plan here](#)

#### **Downtown Revitalization**

At the February 27 CSC meeting, Councillor Troster also referenced the potential opportunities for the arts sector in downtown revitalization plans. We have been following the work of the Downtown Ottawa Revitalization Task Force, a group of politicians, business people and strategists tasked with proposing solutions to revitalize the downtown core through city planning. The published plan lists many ways in which arts will play a key role in downtown revitalization, and we are looking at ways for how we can be ready with the arts sector to leverage these opportunities.

Councillor Troster added, “The displacement of the arts community is something we will be talking about at Planning Committee, it really cuts across all the policy work we do as a City. Certainly within the context of potential conversions of office space. I know I have been raising the issue that in situations where we might be “gifted” federal buildings that are not suitable for conversion into residential. They might be suitable for conversion into studio space or into space for nonprofits.”

We couldn’t agree more with the Councillor!

Now we are asking, “How can we, as a sector, be ready when these opportunities become available?” Reach out to ANO and the Council to share your ideas, join our advocacy efforts, or share some of the challenges you may be facing given the pressures of affordable space in our community.

[hello@ottawaartscouncil.ca](mailto:hello@ottawaartscouncil.ca)

[info@artsnetottawa.ca](mailto:info@artsnetottawa.ca)

This will allow us to better understand the issues from the artist’s perspective and ensure we are putting pressure on areas of importance to you.

#### **Former site for Orange Art Gallery gets heritage designation**

Another thank you to Councillor King and the Built Heritage sub-committee for championing our City’s cultural heritage! Listen more on Councillor King’s recent interview on All in a Day with Alan Neal

#### **Art is active in all parts of our City**

We are also tracking the 1010 Somerset Complex, new Barrhaven Civic Complex and Findlay Creek Recreation Centre planning, the Confederation Heights project and the upcoming Rural Summit (Rural Summit 2024 | Engage Ottawa).

Should other files be on our radar? Let us know!

There is a lot to be excited about for the future of the arts in Ottawa:

- New municipal culture plan on the horizon;
- Onboarding of a Nighttime Commissioner and Advisory Group; a City Council that is actively highlighting the importance of arts and culture in our City.



**We still have work to do. And we look forward to representing you, and advocating with you, as we ensure the community’s voice remains a part of these important conversations.**

**Thanks for reading and for your trust!**

**Nicole and Cassandra**

